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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CONAKRY 000157

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SUBJECT: LES FORCES VIVES NOW REPORTEDLY PUSHING FOR
LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS
IN MARCH

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. During a March 5 meeting with Charge, opposition political leader Jean-Marie Dore said that he had been selected by his peers as the spokesperson for Les Forces Vives. Critical of recent CENI activities, including the proposal of an election timeline to the CNDD, Dore said Les Forces Vives are developing their own election timeline, based on the consensus of all political actors, which will propose to hold legislative elections in October or November and presidential elections in March. Although he gave plenty of justification for the perceived delays, Dore seemed to have no real strategy as to how to deal with the CNDD in the interim. Guinea's political actors seem to be continuing to fight amongst themselves as they seek to position themselves strategically, thereby inadvertently giving the CNDD the perfect opportunity to manipulate the political situation.
END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Charge met with opposition political leader Jean-Marie Dore, of the Union for Guinean Progress (UPG), on March 5. Pol/Econ Chief and Poloff also participated in the meeting. In his seventies, Dore is one of the oldest candidates expected to run for president. During the last legislative election, the UPG won three seats out of 114, but Dore refused to fill them because he said the election was rigged. In the past, he privately told Pol/Econ Chief that the UPG had easily won at least 20 seats. Dore is from the Forest Region and his UPG party is perceived to be largely Forestier although he maintains that it has significant multi-ethnic, national support.

REPRESENTING LES FORCES VIVES

¶3. (C) Dore commented on a series of recent meetings of Les Forces Vives, which is primarily comprised of political parties, civil society groups, and labor unions. He claimed that he had been selected as the group's spokesperson and that he had been meeting with CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara on their behalf. Of key CNDD members, Dore said "I think they are all really sincere...not all of them, but certainly Dadis, Toto Camara, Sekouba Konate, Faro, and Mathurin...there are about seven to ten of them who understand very well that they need to leave power quickly, but not in a situation of disorder."

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CENI

¶4. (C) Turning to elections, Dore said that the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) is not functioning well. He claimed that many political leaders are dissatisfied with CENI President Ben Sekou Syllah and want to

remove him from the CENI. "I am against that because it would just cause further delays," Dore said. However, he said that although the law creating the CENI was a good thing, the fact is that the actual text of the law is flawed.

"The law itself does not really give any power to CENI members to disagree with the CENI President," Dore explained.

According to Dore, one of the current problems is that Syllah went to meet with Dadis shortly after the coup, without consulting with anyone, and successfully convinced Dadis to sign a decree giving the CENI full control over elections. "I am absolutely against that decision...that was never the intent of the law," Dore told Charge.

¶15. (C) Similarly, Dore criticized Syllah's presentation of an election timeline to Dadis, claiming that Syllah had failed to consult with anyone else. He explained that Les Forces Vives are responsible for drafting the timeline and that he, as their spokesperson, will present it to Dadis when it is ready. Dore claimed that the group had nearly reached consensus, and that they planned to propose holding legislative elections in October or November, followed by presidential elections in March. Responding to a question about the apparent backsliding on the presidential elections, Dore explained that there needed to be at least two or three months in between the two elections because "the results of the legislative elections will drive presidential campaigns and candidacies." Dore added that the new legislature's immediate priority will be to pass a national budget, a process that generally takes at least two months, and that National Assembly members will not have time to focus on another election at that time. Dore said Les Forces Vive want to have the chronogram ready in time for the mid-March

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arrival of the International Contact Group.

EMERGING POLITICAL ALLIANCES

¶16. (C) Within Les Force Vives, Dore said that three political alliances have emerged. He claimed that one alliance is dominated by RPG leader Alpha Conde (Rally for the Guinean People), another by UFR leader Sidya Toure (Union of Republican Forces), and a third by controversial millionaire Mamadou Syllah. Pol/Econ Chief questioned whether Mamadou Syllah had any real political influence. Dore agreed that he had little, but that Mamadou Syllah is still part of the political landscape. According to Dore, his own UPG party is at the heart of a fourth emerging alliance, along with Ousmane Bah's UPR (Union for Progress and Renewal). When asked where UFDG leader Cellou Diallo (Union of Guinean Democratic Forces) fit into the picture, Dore said that Cellou is not being picked up in any of the alliances because "he has too much baggage." Dore claimed that his emerging UPG-UPR alliance will prove to be the most powerful out all of the groupings.

WHAT ABOUT THE CNDD?

¶17. (C) Pol/Econ Chief asked how Les Forces Vives plan to handle the question of the CNDD in the proposed interim period between legislative and presidential elections. Instead of answering the question, Dore expounded on the need for constitutional reform. When asked again, Dore shrugged his shoulders and said "that is why we need to cultivate close relationships with them (the CNDD) now...we need to explain our position...if there are differences, we will negotiate with each other like they do in Washington."

IF I WERE PRESIDENT...

¶8. (SBU) Throughout the course of the discussion, Dore repeatedly made statements such as "if I am made President" or "if I am lucky enough to win the election." He mentioned several immediate priorities if he ends up heading a new administration, including improving the civil service retirement pension system, retiring a significant number of senior military officers, and creating a special, exceptional court to address narco-trafficking.

BETTER TO SACRIFICE AN INNOCENT

¶9. (C) As the meeting came to a close, Dore praised the CNDD's recent arrests of individuals suspected of narco-trafficking. He said he was not worried about how the trials were being conducted because the most important thing is to address the problem. Dore claimed that it is better for society to sacrifice an innocent person than to let a guilty one go free. "Besides, even if they are innocent, they made the choice to get mixed up in that stuff," he said. Dore also claimed that while it was appropriate for the CNDD to go after Ousmane Conte and other prominent officials, they should refrain from arresting any of the late President Conte's wives. "Arresting the wives would just give Guinea a bad image," Dore told Charge.

COMMENT

¶10. (C) Although the CENI has already developed a technically sound election timeline, it appears that other political actors want to have a say before they sign off on it. There has been friction between the political parties and the CENI ever since the CENI was initially established, despite the fact that each of the major political parties has at least one representative sitting on the Commission. Dore's insights suggest that it is politics as usual in Guinea, i.e. plenty of political infighting and strategic positioning. Such shenanigans, as exemplified by the disagreement between the CENI and the political parties over the elections timeline, may give the CNDD the perfect opportunity to manipulate the political situation -- much like Conte and others did in the months before the coup.

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¶11. (C) Dore's responses to questions regarding the CNDD suggest that he, and by association Les Forces Vives, have no real strategy in place to force the CNDD to cede power. Dore was adamant that there needed to be a three or four month delay between legislative and presidential elections, but he had no idea what to do about the CNDD during that time period. END COMMENT.

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